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## REVIEWS

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### TYPES OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The realm of children's literature is vast, but an almost pathless jungle to one who has no special training for teaching this fascinating subject. Very few teachers have had the opportunity to make a study of children's literature except in the usually theoretical and cursory "methods in reading" courses where the emphasis is on *how* to teach rather than on *what* to teach. Fortunately for both pupils and teachers, schools for the training of teachers are realizing the imperative need of instruction in the selection as well as in the presentation of children's literature from the pupil's viewpoint. The result of this awakening is the inclusion of the special study of juvenile prose and poetry among the English courses of most normal schools and teachers' colleges. This is a tardy recognition of the incalculable effect of the child's reading on his life and character, and of the need for making this influence count toward achieving the highest aims of education.

Doubtless one reason why the unlimited possibilities of juvenile literature in character-building have not received proper emphasis is the fact that no adequate chart or compass has been available to aid the teacher in finding a way through the jungle of books for children. Her teaching has been hit-or-miss, largely devoted to keeping pupils away from hair-raising paper-backs and lurid tales of the Bertha M. Clay type, and to attempting more or less vainly to inspire a pleasurable perusal of the obvious classics of the graded reading books. She has timidly held to the outskirts of the vast unknown realm because she was dubious about the hinterland.

*Types of Children's Literature* by Walter Barnes will be a welcome guide and source-book for teachers of elementary English, for normal-school teachers, and for intelligent parents who share with the school the responsibility for developing a love of good reading.<sup>1</sup> This new book contains unusually well-chosen selections typifying every form of prose and poetry that children enjoy. Its great merit lies not in number of selections but in the excellent variety and choice of representative types.

<sup>1</sup> *Types of Children's Literature*. By WALTER BARNES. Yonkers, N.Y.: World Book Co., 1919.

The compiler has been guided not by the principle of what a child *ought* to like but by the pragmatism of what he *does* like. Years of experience in studying children's reactions upon their reading have made possible a selection that teacher or parent may trust to represent, not only what is wholesome in the realm of literature for children, but also what may lead to a love of good literature in its manifold forms.

H. E. F.

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#### A REAL CHILDREN'S DICTIONARY<sup>1</sup>

In an age when education has been found to be not so much knowing things as knowing where to find things out, the dictionary habit is one of the most useful contributions that the school can make to the training of the child. The bulk of an "Unabridged," however, may be somewhat dismaying to the spirit of the boy or girl whose dictionary habit is not yet formed; and it is to the formation of a habit that will develop later into a more scholarly research among words, that the *Winston Simplified Dictionary* will be of very real assistance. It is particularly adapted in scope to the upper grammar grades or to the junior high school, as it includes the word in common use, and therefore the ones most likely to be met in their reading and conversation by children of from twelve to fifteen. Such a statement may not seem to differentiate this book from others of its class; but some of the outstanding features of the volume do so differentiate it.

Prominent among these features is the abandonment of the system by which dictionaries have heretofore sent the inquirer on a lengthy chase from one word to another before a satisfactory meaning is finally hunted down. Under every entry, in this book, is found an actual, clear, and simple definition of the word entered. *Reconciliation*, for instance, is not defined as "the act of reconciling" but as "the renewal of friendship," among other concrete definitions. Obviously, such a plan is much less discouraging to the young student than was the one heretofore generally followed.

Another excellent feature of the book is its use of verbal illustration as a means of making clear special uses of words. The vocabulary, while not including words beyond the ken of the eighth grade, is still wide enough to cover the needs of science, history, literature, and life—

<sup>1</sup>*The Winston Simplified Dictionary*. Edited by WILLIAM D. LEWIS, A.M., PED.D., Principal of the William Penn High School of Philadelphia, and EDGAR A. SINGER, PH.D., of the University of Pennsylvania. Illustrated. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1919. \$0.96 net.